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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 DOHA 000198

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [QA](#)

SUBJECT: QATAR BEGINNING TO COOPERATE MORE ACTIVELY WITH
USG ON COUNTERTERRORISM ISSUES; READY TO SIGN MOU ON
JUDICIAL ASSISTANCE

REF: DOHA 167

Classified By: Ambassador Joseph E. LeBaron, for reasons 1.4 (b, d).

(S) KEY POINTS

-- Qatar's Attorney General (QAG) advised the Ambassador March 18 that Jarallah Al-Marri had been placed under a new six-month travel ban since his return from the United Kingdom in late February.

-- The ban, he added, could be extended in additional six-month increments as necessary. QAG reiterated his assertion March 4 (reftel) that he was bound only by signed judicial assistance agreements and not diplomatic notes, such as those exchanged concerning requirements for Qatari GTMO detainees transferred to Qatar.

-- QAG stated that Al-Qaida facilitator and Qatari citizen Khalifa Al-Subaiy continues to be under surveillance by State Security (QSS) and his bank accounts remain frozen.

(S) COMMENTS

-- Given the recent increase in intelligence exchanges and possible swing towards improved security cooperation, the GOQ may be responding to Ambassador's full-court press in addressing those issues at senior levels.

-- We support QAG's proposed meeting with the U.S. Attorney General and FBI Director in an effort to motivate QAG towards continued cooperation. If possible, the visit should be scheduled for May/June 2009 before the current LEGATT departs Post.

-- QAG is adamant that requests by the USG for Qatari legal actions need to be orchestrated between the DOJ and his office, either in writing or through direct negotiation. Formalization of the pending MOU between the DOJ and QAG on judicial assistance would advance this cooperation.

END KEY POINTS AND COMMENTS.

¶1. (C) Ambassador and LEGATT's meeting with QAG, Dr. Ali Al-Marri, was in follow up to their March 4 meeting regarding Jarallah Al-Marri and counterterrorism cooperation in general. QAG opened the discussion by assuring Ambassador that both Jarallah Al-Marri and Khalifa Al-Subaiy were "under control." QAG stated that Jarrallah Al-Marri is now on a new six-month travel restriction since returning from the United Kingdom in late February, adding that he could continue imposing six-month additional increments as necessary. Regarding Al-Subaiy, QAG said all of his bank accounts were still frozen and that he remains under QSS surveillance. QAG

said he would allow Al-Subaiy to have one operational bank account in order to take care of his living expenses, but that it would be monitored/controlled by the Central Bank.

¶2. (C) QAG told Ambassador that the Amir had directed him to improve counterterrorism cooperation with the U.S., giving him the "green light" to assist to the fullest extent. QAG said that he was the only Qatari official authorized to deal with legal issues, to include those related to counterterrorism answers only to the Crown Prince and Amir; and receives no interference from either on how he operates. Referring to his requested meetings in Washington with U.S. Attorney General Holder and FBI Director Mueller, QAG assured Ambassador that "We are friends and will work together with or without the visit."

¶3. (C) Ambassador acknowledged QAG's willingness to help mend counterterrorism cooperation, stating that the U.S. and Qatar must communicate openly as friends. Ambassador also acknowledged that he was optimistic security cooperation would continue to improve. However, Ambassador told stressed to QAG the importance of the critical link between U.S./Qatar political relations and security cooperation.

¶4. (C) Ambassador cited Jarallah Al-Marri's travel to the United Kingdom in early 2009, contrary to assurances from Qatar that the GOQ would notify the U.S. in advance of any travel, as an example of how political relations between the two countries are adversely impacted by a lack of security cooperation. QAG restated his assertion made March 4 that no agreement on Jarallah Al-Marri exists between the U.S. DOJ and QAG. Ambassador then reiterated the U.S. position that

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the diplomatic agreement regarding Jarallah Al-Marri affected all ministries involved.

¶5. (C) Ambassador told QAG the U.S. and Qatar face two security cooperation challenges: improving intelligence cooperation and improving judicial cooperation. QAG agreed, stating that Qatar could address that challenge, but that he needs evidence that can be used in a Qatari court.

¶6. (C) Ambassador told QAG that after their last meeting he proposed a new mechanism whereby certain intelligence relating to counterterrorism issues with legal remedies would be shared with QAG through AG Holder. Ambassador said such a proposal touches on sensitive concerns for both countries, and is still being explored. Both Ambassador and QAG agreed that such a mechanism could not minimize or adversely affect established U.S./Qatari intelligence relationships.

¶7. (C) Ambassador acknowledged a recent increase in cooperation between U.S. and Qatari intelligence officials since their last meeting, attributing it in part to QAG. QAG concurred. In fact, QAG said he had weighed in with QSS Director Mohamed Al-Misnad after the last meeting with Ambassador, even though he told Ambassador at the time that he could not advise another head of agency how to do his job. QAG told Ambassador that Al-Misnad was in a difficult predicament in that any meeting between him and an Ambassador, particularly the U.S. Ambassador, was sensitive. Ambassador again reiterated the recent improvement in QSS' cooperation, adding that it was immediately noticed in Washington and that Al-Misnad's visit there would be successful.

¶8. (C) Ambassador offered that Qatar's recent efforts towards improving counterterrorism cooperation was promising and that he is no longer opposed to moving forward with QAG's proposed meetings in Washington with Attorney General Holder and FBI Director Mueller, suggesting May or June 2009 as a realistic time frame for holding those meetings.
LeBaron